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CEREBUS GOING HOME 14

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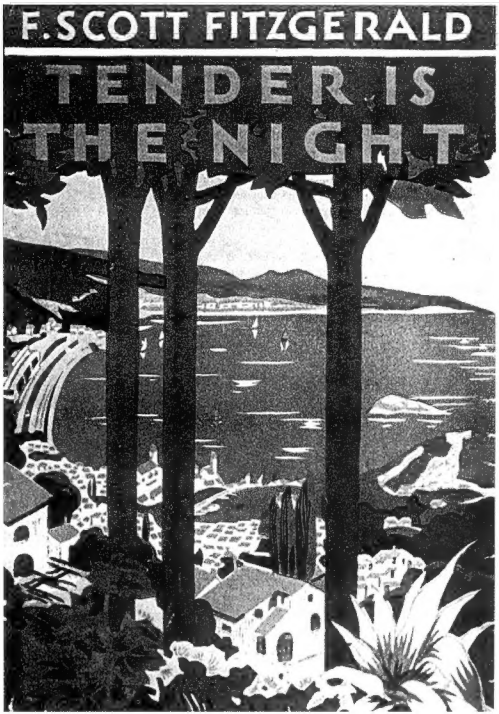
CEREBUS
NO. 245 AUGUST 1999



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GOING HOME

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BOOK ONE
Sudden Moves
(Cerebus 232 to 239)

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BOOK TWO
Fall and the River
(Cerebus 240 to 250)

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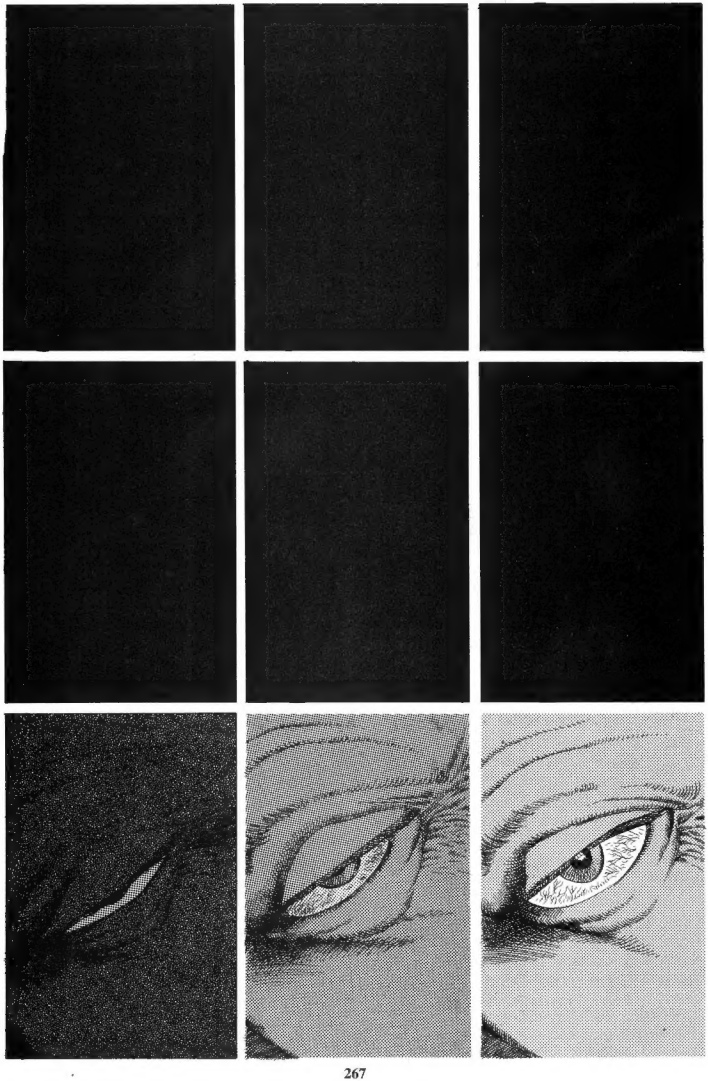
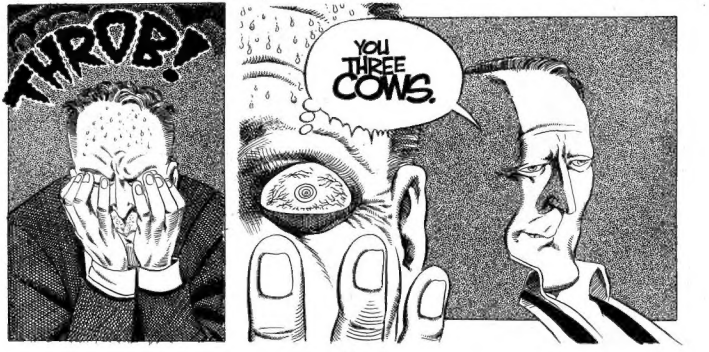
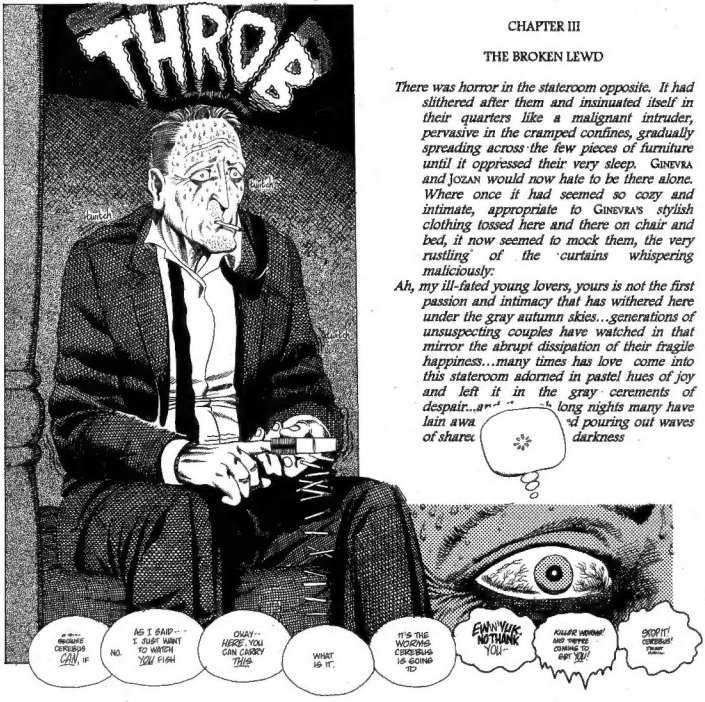


THROB
THROB
"I think that I shall tell myself the story of my
was BEHIND me. Do you understand? I was BROWN."
"After a few tastes of this bitter dish
"You see, I felt that men were denying them-
I suppose that's the beginning of the SECOND phase of my educat
We produce a Cirin who can raise up all brides
THROB

THROB
twitch


THROB!
YOU THREE COWS.


THROB
AS I SAID-- I JUST WANT TO WATCH YOU FISH
OKAY-- HERE, YOU CAN CARRY THIS
WHAT IS IT.
IT'S THE WORMS CERBERUS IS GOING TO
EWW YUK. NO THANK YOU.
KILLER WORMS! AND THEY'RE COMING TO GET YOU!
BOO!!! CERBERUS! THANK

CHAPTER III

THE BROKEN LEWD

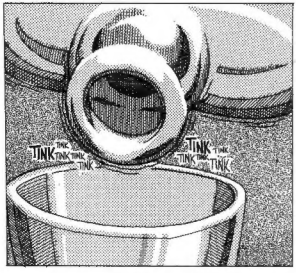
There was horror in the stateroom opposite. It had slithered after them and insinuated itself in their quarters like a malignant intruder, pervasive in the cramped confines, gradually spreading across the few pieces of furniture until it oppressed their very sleep. GINEVRA *and* JOZAN *would now hate to be there alone. Where once it had seemed so cozy and intimate, appropriate to* GINEVRA'S *stylish clothing tossed here and there on chair and bed, it now seemed to mock them, the very rustling of the curtains whispering maliciously:*

Ah, my ill-fated young lovers, yours is not the first passion and intimacy that has withered here under the gray autumn skies...generations of unsuspecting couples have watched in that mirror the abrupt dissipation of their fragile happiness...many times has love come into this stateroom adorned in pastel hues of joy and left it in the gray cerements of despair...and [illegible] long nights many have lain awa[illegible]d pouring out waves of share[illegible] darkness

CHAPTER III

THE BROKE AND LOOT

In the mornings, JAY ANTHONY DIVER *awoke (always) to exhaustion, anxiety, and apprehension. The purple chill of early sunrise and the gilded brilliance of mid-morning (alike) left him unmoved. It was for a brief period only (each day) in the renewed warmth and false dawn of his first high-ball that his mind turned to those opalescent dreams of a pleasurable future (birthright of the blessed; delusion of the damned). A brief period. As he plunged, headlong, into his inebriated state, the dreams faded and he became a confused apparition, searching out odd nooks in the corners of his mind, filled with malignant insights, plumbing sodden and dispirited depths.*



KNOCK KNOCK
KAKIAK
MR. KENNEDY?
ARE YOU DECENT?
WHAT A SPLENDID RECITATION YOU GAVE LAST NIGHT, MR. KENNEDY!
I PARTICULARLY ENJOYED THE PASSAGE ABOUT THE THREE FAITHFUL SISTERS
"WIDELY SEPARATED ONE -- FROM ONE -- FROM THE OTHER."
THREE OF OUTFITS!
OH!
WELL.. I...
NOW, I SHAN'T DISTURB YOU
HOWEVER, I DO RECALL YOU SAYING THAT YOU HAVE SUITS THAT NEED CLEANING AND PRESSING.
OH!
WELL.. I...
I REALLY MUST! THERE'S JUST SO MUCH TO BE DONE ON ONE OF SORROWS THAT EVER COMES IN A WHILE, THERE
OH!
WELL.. I...
BUT I WILL GET TO THEM RIGHT AWAY
I PROMISE
CLATTER GLINK GLINK
IN FACT, IF YOU WANT TO GET CHANGED, I'LL COME BACK AND GET THE SUIT YOU HAVE ON AND THAT WAY I WON'T BE INTERRUPTING YOUR WORK
UNCLE TIMMY'S EXPLOSIVE BOOBY TRAP GUN
OH!
WELL.. I...

JUST LEAVE THE SUIT OUTSIDE YOUR DOOR, MR KENNEDY
AND I'LL BE BACK TO GET IT IN A FEW MINUTES
OH!
WELL
NOT AT ALL, MR. KENNEDY. NOT AT ALL
?
"DUTIFUL SISTERS"?
"COWS"?
THEY DON'T SOUND EVEN A BIT
KA KLAK
OH, MR. KENNEDY I... I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU THAT... THAT.. I UNDERSTAND
SNIFF
IT-- IT'S NOT THAT JAY ANTHONY DIVER DOESN'T LOVE XENA
BUT... BUT IT ISN'T THE SAME-- NOT HE-- WHAT HE FEELS FOR GINEVRA I MEAN
HE'S NEVER FELT ANYTHING LIKE IT BEFORE IN HIS LIFE. HE, SNIFF
AND JAY ANTHONY DIVER DESERVES SOME SNIFF SOME HAPPINESS IN THIS LIFE TOO SNIFF DOESN'T HE
(er) Perhaps we could DISCUSS this
YES! JAY ANTHONY DIVER NEEDS A WOMAN CONFIDANT! SNIFF
AFTER I get changed
I'M HERE FOR YOU SNIFF MR. KENNEDY
I'M
KA KLAK

You SEE, (my dear)
LOVE (for a writer) is not the same as love is for... OTHER... men
a WRITER loves ALL women EQUALLY-- and PASSIONATELY
for EACH woman is an inspiration -- IGNITING the fires of the various aspects of his CREATIVITY
Whether she is HIS WIFE
Whether she is the PRINCESS of PALNU
or whether she is a sweet, starry-eyed, raven-haired, something something something
THROB THROB
OH, Mr. KENNEDY...
You explain everything so BEAUTIFULLY-- shouldn't
Shouldn't we continue our discussion -- in your stateroom?
OH!!
Well
I-- uh...

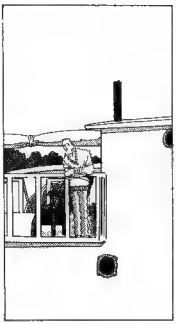
dear, DEAR (whatever her name turns out to be): I should be delIGHTED to continue our conversation
THROB RUB THROB SOB THROB RUB THROB RUB THROB
But!
I consider myself to be a SINGULARLY law-abiding fellow.
So I hope you will believe me when I say that I intend NO IMPERTINENCE! I merely seek CLARIFICATION ...
THAT IS -- when you say: 'in my stateroom' -- am I to lead myself to INFER --?
that is ARE YOU...?
DEAR Mr. Kennedy ...
I was, INDEED, speaking, EUPHEMISTICALLY. My IMPLIED desire is that we repair -- IMMEDIATELY to your stateroom
for the EXPRESS PURPOSE of engaging in ADULTEROUS PHYSICAL RELATIONS!
My Own Sweet (whatever her name turns out to be): You have only to reassure me that I am in no way inflicting, unwelcome sexual advances upon your person NOR harassing, you with demeaning, innuendo and/or comments inappropriate to the workplace, and we.. WE'RE
KA-KLAK
I shall be HAPPY to put it in WRITING!
KISS ME, Mr. Kennedy! Kiss me NOW! RIGHT in my WORKPLACE!
GULP
SPLASH!!
THUMP
THUMP

MISTER KENNEDY
LET ME REMIND YOU THAT:
UNDER MATRIARCHAL LAW
A HUSBAND REQUIRES WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM HIS WIFE TO COMMIT ADULTERY
OR TO MAKE ANY ADULTEROUS OVERTURE.
WHAT.
SO.
EVER.
LET ME FURTHER REMIND YOU--
MR. KENNEDY--
THAT THE PENALTY FOR UNAUTHORIZED ADULTERY OR UNAUTHORIZED ADULTEROUS OVERTURES IS IMMEDIATE CASTRATION
AND SUBSEQUENT
EXECUTION.
UNLESS
Ahem-
UNLESS
(If I am NOT mistaken)
The ADULTERY is INITIATED by a WOULD-BE ... Adulteress?
SKETCH SKETCH

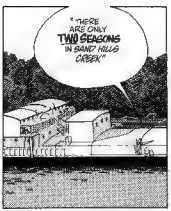
MISTER KENNEDY
WHATEVER
LITERARY
INTEREST YOU MAY HAVE
AROUSED
IN MY JUNIOR COLLEAGUES, I CAN ASSURE YOU— NEITHER I NOR THEY WOULD CONSIDER JEOPARDIZING OUR GOOD STANDING IN MATRIARCHAL SOCIETY
FOR THE SAKE OF A FEW SWEATY, HORIZONTAL MINUTES.
WITH A WRINKLED LIP.
BALDING.
POT-BELLIED.
PREMATURELY AGE-ED. ROUE. WHO STINKS.
MR. KENNEDY.
OF GIN AND CIGARETTE SMOKE
TWITCH

RE. FOR HER ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE PRINCESS OF PALMU (MR KENNEDY). I SUGGEST THAT YOU --CAREFULLY-- CONFINE YOUR FABULIST DELUSIONS TO THE PAGES OF YOUR NOVEL. FOR...
...WHILE IT IS AN OPEN QUESTION AS TO WHETHER "JAY ANTHONY DYER'S" UNHEALTHY INTEREST IN "GINEVRA" DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN ACT OF ADULTERY ON THE PART OF FRANCIS STOP KENNEDY...
SNIFF.
IT IS EQUALLY AN OPEN QUESTION AS TO WHETHER IT DOES. AS, LIKEWISE, IT REMAINS TO BE DECIDED IF THE COMMISSION OF THE HIGH CRIME OF ADULTERY ON THE PRINTED PAGE
IS TO BE PUNISHED WITH THE SAME SEVERITY AS THE CRIME ITSELF.
HAVE I MADE MYSELF CLEAR, MR KENNEDY?
Greys talline
SPLENDID.
I SHALL LEAVE YOU, THEN, TO ENJOY THE BALANCE OF THIS UNSEASONABLY WARM DAY.
Most kind of you

PANT
PUFF
PANT
SHUDDER
TWITCH



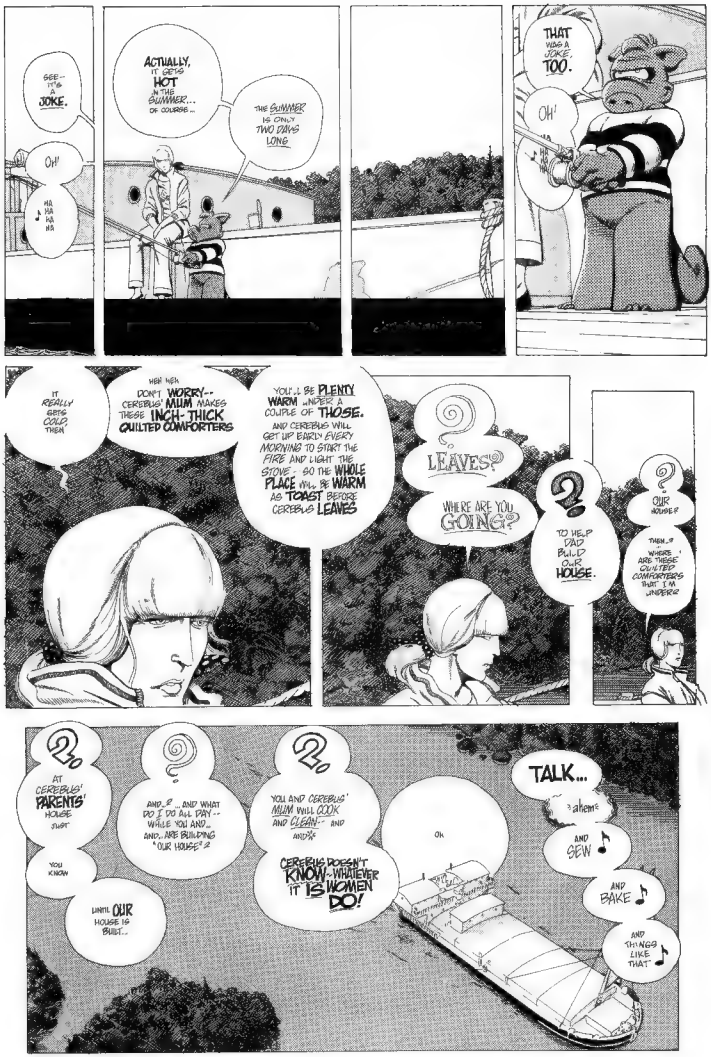
HEH
AS THE ARROWS GOES!

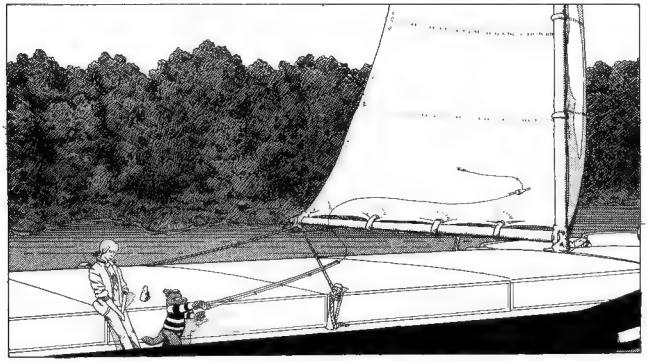

"THERE ARE ONLY TWO SEASONS IN SAND HILLS CREEK"

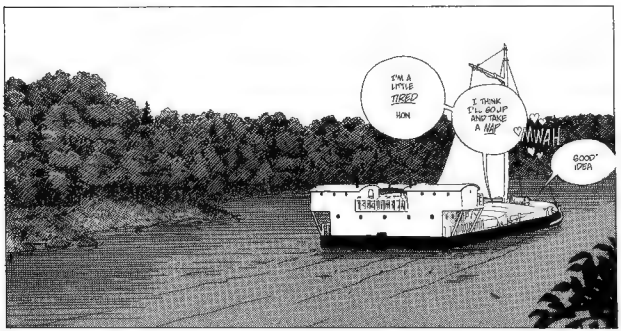
"WINTER"
HEH HEH AND "BAD SLEDDING"

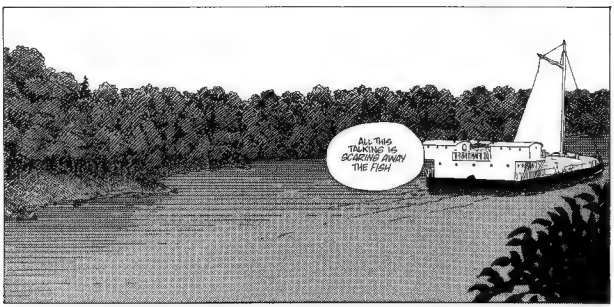
HAHA
HAHA!

?


SEE-- IT'S A JOKE.
OH!
HA HA HA HA
ACTUALLY, IT GETS HOT IN THE SUMMER... OF COURSE...
THE SUMMER IS ONLY TWO DAYS LONG.
THAT WAS A JOKE, TOO.
OH!
IT REALLY GETS COLD, THEN
WAH HAH DON'T WORRY-- CEREBUS' MUM MAKES THESE INCH-THICK QUILTED COMFORTERS
YOU'LL BE PLENTY WARM UNDER A COUPLE OF THOSE. AND CEREBUS WILL GET UP EARLY EVERY MORNING TO START THE FIRE AND LIGHT THE STOVE - SO THE WHOLE PLACE WILL BE WARM AS TOAST BEFORE CEREBUS LEAVES
LEAVES?
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO HELP DAD BUILD OUR HOUSE.
OUR HOUSE?
THEN... WHERE ARE THESE QUILTED COMFORTERS THAT I'M UNDER?
AT CEREBUS' PARENTS' HOUSE JUST
YOU KNOW
UNTIL OUR HOUSE IS BUILT...
AND... IF ... AND WHAT DO I DO ALL DAY -- WHILE YOU AND... AND... ARE BUILDING "OUR HOUSE"?
YOU AND CEREBUS' MUM WILL COOK AND CLEAN-- AND AND--
CEREBUS DOESN'T KNOW - WHATEVER IT IS WOMEN DO!
OH
TALK...
AHEM
AND SEW
AND BAKE
AND THINGS LIKE THAT




I'M A LITTLE TIRED HUH
I THINK I'LL GOUP AND TAKE A NAP
AWAH
GOOD IDEA


ALL THIS TALKING IS SCARING AWAY THE FISH

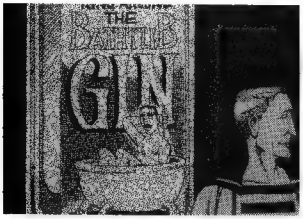
PUFF
PUFF
PUFF
TELL ME, MR. KENNEDY
WHAT IS MEALC
LIKE

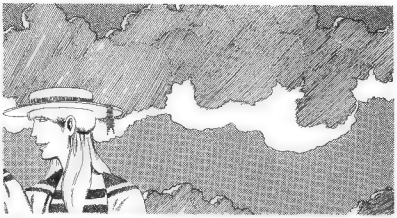
MEALC isn't LIKE...
Guarded on two of the three seas -- the northWEST and the
by impregnable walls of massive and shakely palm trees
from which it derives its ANCESTRAL name -- MEALC o'NALo'WAI "PALMS which FLOWER from the SEA"...

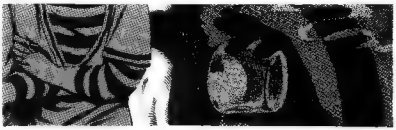
Upon ONE of these cliffs is the antique colony which I mentioned to you before -- Chateau Eudemys, as it is known --
enclosed within a lovely, grassless garden the garden bounded on ONE side by the Chateau itself
from which it flows...and INTO which it RUNS

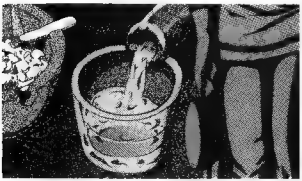
A SEA as mysteriously coloured as the agates and cornelians of childhood..
..green as green milk..

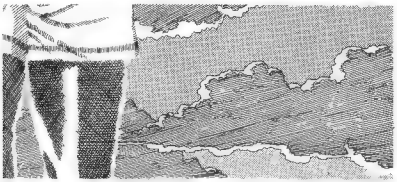
sun
sh.ne
YOU SHOULD TALK ABOUT MEALS MORE OFTEN, MRKENNEDY
IT MAKES YOU LOOK TEN YEARS YOUNGER.
!!!

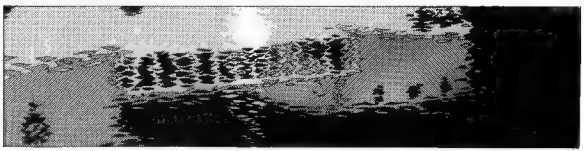

THE
GIN

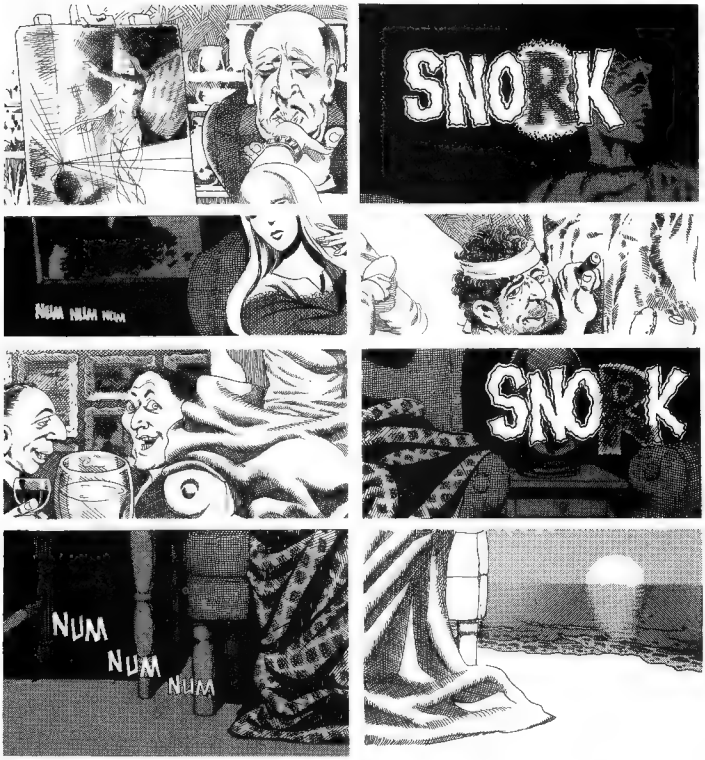


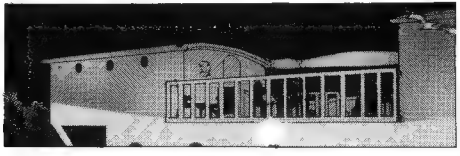









SNORK
NUM NUM NUM
SNORK
NUM
NUM
NUM



CHASING SCOTT

Page 268 – At the most extreme depths of my own alcoholism (or "alcoholism" or Alcoholism—I got so tired of trying to tell the difference, I basically gave up drinking), I was subject to blackout episodes. Quite literally, I would be drinking like a fish and having what I thought was a wonderful time, and then I would wake up in my bed or on my couch, usually fully clothed, with no sense that any time had passed and no recollection of how I had gotten from point A to point B. Within seconds of awakening, I would begin to retrace my steps, mentally, following stray threads of remembered conversation—usually arriving back at some metaphorically blood-spattered recollection as I have F. Stop Kennedy doing here. Likewise, the metaphorically blood-spattered recollection would prove to be only the first of many, coming "hard on the heels" of one another "the morning after," leading to what an ex-girlfriend of mine called (rather cleverly, I thought) "chemical remorse."

Page 269 – These two text fragments were part of the initial batch of *The Beautiful and Damned* excerpts that I decided to work with. The first, from the "Symposium" chapter (prior to Maury Noble's monologue), starts under the sub-heading "That Sinister Summer" (page 233). In Fitzgerald's original it concerns the house that Anthony and Gloria have rented in Marietta, New York: a fictionalized version of the 18th-century Wakeman house on Compo Road in Westport, Connecticut which Scott and Zelda (actually Scott's money) rented between May and September 1920 and where Fitzgerald began and wrote much of *The Beautiful and Damned*. At the top of the 11 x 17 photocopy, I wrote: "F. Stop in his compartment reflecting on Cerebus and Jaka in theirs after the bad night."

The second, from "A Matter of Æsthetics" chapter, under the sub-heading "Further Adventures with 'Heart Talks'" (page 388), concerns Anthony pretty far along in his "downward spiral" of alcoholic despair. At the top of the 11 x 17 photocopy, I wrote: "F. Stop on himself, just before the end."

Although I reminded myself often that "Fall and the River" takes place within the specific confines of 220 pages and is, therefore, "short-story-sized" like F. Scott Fitzgerald's "May Day" (first published in *The Smart Set*, July 1920)—that is, a *long* short story but well short of a novel*—this was far from my mind as I reworked the initial batch of excerpts. Of course, once it came time to place these two excerpts where they "belonged" in the context of my own story, the discovery that "after the bad night" and "just before the end" landed on the same page was a pretty sharp reminder. Yikes (as they say).

I was working a couple of months ahead of Gerhard at this point, so the two excerpts just floated on page 269 for quite a while until I began work on page 296 and their new context emerged, which I will deal with when I get to page 296 below.

Page 270 – As a writer, it inevitably amazes me what people see in my work. Of course, it also amazes me what I think I see in the writing of others. Many is the time that I've gone back to a book or a passage that has had a profound effect on my thinking, only to find that the book or passage bears only a cursory resemblance to the book or passage that I remember—in those instances where it doesn't say exactly the *opposite* of what I remember it saying.

Given the visual metaphor (page 255, bottom panel) that I used to depict the Cirinists' tripartite reaction to this part of F. Stop Kennedy's "Singularity" monologue, I don't think it's an impossible "stretch" that the Cirinists' emotion-based, mind-reading natures would substitute "dutiful sisters" for "cows."

No more of an impossible "stretch" than—say—when women hear "romantic love" in rock 'n' roll song lyrics when what is being sung about is good old-fashioned sex.

Page 271 – Unwittingly, F. Stop Kennedy has tracked metaphorical mud into one of the Cirinists' nice, clean gray areas first alluded to in *Melmoth* (page 37):

> To the Cirinists the author is their only concern. Once he's been approved as a "jolly chap" by every mother who has known him since infancy, he could write a recipe book on the preparation and serving of "Cirinist cutlets" and it would be of no interest or concern to them whatsoever.

Two things about F. Stop Kennedy catch the Cirinists with their metaphorical pants down. First, the *roman à clef* which confounds the too-literal Cirinist mind ("mind" would not be overstating the case, I don't think). F. Stop Kennedy "is" Jay Anthony Diver. In the Cirinist world, there is no such thing as "is." To the Cirinists, either F. Stop Kennedy *Is* Jay Anthony Diver or F. Stop Kennedy *Is Not* Jay Anthony Diver. To F. Stop Kennedy, Jay Anthony Diver, Ginevra, and Jozan are fictional hand-puppets useful only insofar as he can utilize them to communicate ideas, in the most literal sense of "utilize" and "communicate." To the Cirinists—and, in my

*My own belief that there should be some sort of demarcation in the comic-book field between a "graphic novel" and a comic-book story has fallen on completely deaf ears. I suspect that my suggestion that the 220-page "Fall and the River" would qualify as the latter—while *Going Home* would qualify as the former—will further solidify my reputation and standing in the field as an eccentric, marginalized, and thoroughly discredited nutcase. Mind you, I'm not complaining. I save a lot of money on air travel this way.

experience, to *any* female mind—the *roman à clef* is a thinly veiled confessional by which an author introduces a proxy so he can admit to feelings and experiences and emotional reactions which would be too painful for him to reveal without a fictional self to hide behind.

HA! As if.

Second: the Cirinists have no awareness of themselves as a negative, evil force from which any author would desire to be shielded. Related to this, F. Stop Kennedy is aware of Jaka's power over the Cirinists, which is why he is interested in having her as his patroness. The Cirinists are as ignorant of their "blind spot" for Jaka as they are of their own inherent evil. If F. Stop can get Jaka to be his patroness (in company with other artists and writers), then he knows that his work will enjoy the same knee-jerk approval the Cirinists grant to everything Jaka approves of and he can write more directly and effectively without having to hedge his bets and blunt his points all the time.

This was the real purpose of his "Singularity" monologue: to first of all impart some important information (as a kind of down payment on the valuable things he intends to contribute in the future) and to refute any notion that his intentions toward Jaka are romantic—read: adulterous (he's aware that this would be an overriding concern of the Cirinists)—culminating in:

> In the clarity of the brightening day, it seemed presumptuous that with this feeble, broken instrument of his heart he had ever tried to love.

In at least a dozen different ways he says, "That part of my life is over. My interest in Jaka is not romantic. All I want is the creative freedom that she represents."

Being women, as well as Cirinists, they don't hear that. What they hear is: "I love Jaka and I still love Gloria. I want both of them."

So that's the joke behind the second Cirinist tearfully telling F. Stop Kennedy that *she* thinks it's okay: that F. Stop Kennedy and Jaka *should* be together because he *obviously* loves Jaka more than he ever loved Gloria. F. Stop, having no romantic interest in Jaka (well, I mean, sure, he'd like to get into her pants—who wouldn't?—but he sure wouldn't take a chance along those lines if it meant jeopardizing, in any way, the chance of Jaka becoming his patroness), just hears the "Jay Anthony Diver deserves some happiness in this life, too, doesn't he" and "I'm here for you, Mr. Kennedy" part.

(That last panel is autobiographical, by the way. At various points in my life I couldn't swing a dead cat without hitting a woman who wanted to be my "confidant." Very seldom was sex suggested, of course, just a solid offer to let me spill my guts to whoever-she-was-at-the-time.

HA! As if.)

Page 272 – F. Stop Kennedy tries to figure out how to turn a would-be woman "confidant" into a bed partner.

HA! As if.

Page 273 – Female-generated legislation always involves mind-reading, i.e., "unwanted sexual touching and/or advances." How can a man tell if his sexual touches or advances are unwanted? Answer: he has to read the woman's mind ahead of time, as women do with men—knowing with a great degree of certainty if their overture or advance is likely to be welcome or unwelcome and *not* making such an overture or advance if their mind-reading tells them it is likely to be unwelcome.

It seems more sensible to say, "Any romantic entanglement in the work place is unethical, unprofessional, and counterproductive." That is, sexual overtures or advances should be viewed in the same way as one would view spitting on someone's desk or licking someone's eyeglasses. The reaction engendered should be an immediate "Oh, heavens, NO!" followed by a "look askance" as if to say, "I can't believe you would even consider such a thing as being suitable for discussion."

But, of course, this is not the way of the unfairer sex, who didn't so much *enter* the work force as relocate their peculiar domestic priorities (love *über alles*, romance, matchmaking, gender interchangeability, obsessive interest in their own and others' private lives, excessive discussion of their own and others' private lives, and interference in the private lives of others) bag and baggage into an environment where such "priorities" had, hitherto, been sternly regarded as distractions and irrelevancies where they were not regarded (as I think they have proven themselves to be) as wholly counterproductive and, thus, legitimate grounds for immediate dismissal.

Ethically, I think you have to remove emotion from legislation if you want to frame effective legislation. "*No* sexual touching" is straightforward. "*Unwanted* sexual touching" implies that "*some*" sexual touching in the work place is good as long as it is "*desired*" by the "touch-ee" (I'll resist the temptation to make a remark about "touchy feminists" here).

Tangentially—before leaving bad enough alone (as it were)—I'll point out that feminists, thirty years later on, are coming late to the realization that jobs devour lives, leaving table scraps and remnants of time for "everything else" that is commonly regarded as going into the making up of "a life." Very much contrary to Gloria Steinem's early '70s observation—"We have become the men we wanted to marry"—I think it more accurate to say that feminists have become instead the men they wanted to—and in most cases *did*—*divorce*: workaholics impatient with and intolerant of their "significant others'" unwillingnesses to subsist on the miserly table scraps and remnants of time which are apportioned to them, after the "job" has extracted its own "pound of flesh."

Of course, now that we know *that*, what do we know?

Page 274 – Cirinist adultery laws. I started with what I gather to have been Jackie's view of her marriage to JFK ("As long as I'm the one he comes home to, as long as he's discreet about his affairs, and as long as I'm the one who gets to spend his inheritance when he's looking and

his father's capital when he isn't…") and plotted a straight line from there to what I gather was her view of her marriage to Aristotle Onassis ("As long as I almost never have to see him, almost never have to have sex with him, and I get to spend every penny of his I can—by hook or by crook— get my hands on…").

Tangential digression: How many wives *want* to have sex with their husbands? How many wives *have* sex with their husbands? How many wives see having sex with their husbands after marriage as making about as much sense as baiting your hook *after* you've landed your fish? You could take a survey, I suppose, but I don't think you would get honest answers—wives would answer the way they think they are supposed to answer. You could always make the questions more—penetrating? How many wives think it would improve their marriages if their husbands became permanently impotent? How many wives would consider it "no big deal" if everything else in their marriage stayed the same but sex just "went away" sort of permanently?

I extended my philosophical straight line from Jackie's marriage to JFK to Jackie's marriage to Onassis (On ass. Is.), and what do you know? It hooked up almost exactly with Yoko Ono arranging John Lennon's affair with their secretary, May Pang. A truly pragmatic solution for a truly pragmatic dowager empress…er…woman: Yoko didn't want to have sex with him anymore, she knew *he* still wanted to have sex (for reasons which evidently escaped her—and which escaped all of us guys who saw the *Two Virgins* album cover), she didn't want him running around loose, carelessly spending his own money on trivialities when she needed it to buy basic household necessities like Egyptian sarcophagi. Answer? Pick out a lover for him and call all the shots.

I extended my philosophical Jackie/JFK, Jackie/Onassis, Yoko Ono/John Lennon/May Pang straight line, and what do you know? It hooked up almost exactly with Hillary and Bill Clinton on *60 Minutes* (right after—or was it during half time?—of the 1992 Superbowl). Particularly Bill's implicit (and a couple of times *EX*plicit) assertions that he "felt" (I'm pretty sure he didn't say "thought")—that he "felt" that adultery was a private matter between husband and wife. I think this is the reason that so many women were noticeably absent in disapproving of the adultery aspect of the impeachment hearings: the philosophical straight line I've described represents the evolution—in my view, the *DE*evolution—of female ethics, so far "advanced" that disapproving of either Clinton represented the potential destruction of the Feminist Nouveau Camelot—where, for one, brief shining moment Guinevere Rodham Clinton had doting servants, power, influence, fame, closets full of designer clothes, her own sumptuous living quarters and offices, and (evidently by pre-arrangement) she not only *didn't* have to have sex with her husband *EVER* (O frabjous day!), she didn't even have to give him a passing thought after the election!

Of course the noose gradually tightened around Bill's neck as he held to the view that adultery could be made right as long as a husband and wife agree it is—and loosened only at the point (check the record, folks) where he said that his fate, ultimately, was in the hands of God.

Anyway, the Cirinist laws described on this page resulted from extending my philosophical straight line just a smidgen past 1992 Hillary and Bill.

The squeamish among you should derive great reassurance from the fact that the "castration" the Cirinist is referring to here is accomplished very humanely through an "all-natural" means devised by Cirin's horticultural genius—similar to the pharmaceutical equivalents available in our own world—and the "subsequent execution" applies only to repeat offenders whose libido is resistant to the aforementioned "all-natural" castration.

At the bottom of this page, F. Stop Kennedy still isn't quite "up to speed" and thinks the third Cirinist is just trying to "head him off at the pass" with what he takes to be a virtual "sure thing" of getting laid with the tearful Cirinist. F. Scott Fitzgerald—like virtually all writers—seemed unable to face, head on, that sleeping with a writer is very far down on "the list" for most women who sleep with a man because of his profession, so I'm having a little fun with that here.

[It took me years to get over the same "blind spot" in my own life: to recognize that the unfairer sex's disinterest in writers—apart from the *occasional* literate woman who finds her own absence as a character in a *roman à clef* to be the only serious deficiency in the world's literature—is actually a great "plus." Viewed in terms of productivity, it is the job of the lesser professions (actors, professional athletes, musicians) to keep the genuine "babes" from distracting us from the important business of communicating with our own and (hopefully) future generations. Alas, just looking at the wives of the writers I most admire, past and present (with the notable exceptions of two of Norman Mailer's six wives, Barbara and Norris), I see it hasn't seemed to work out that way, and writers seem to have settled for what could most charitably be described as "third or fourth string" wives rather than "get the message." By way of example, I have slept with very few women as sincerely butt-ugly as Ernest Hemingway's wives—much less married them.]

Pages 275-276 – Extrapolating further on what I would consider to be F. Scott Fitzgerald's sometimes borderline, sometimes full-blown schizophrenia. In my experience it is only those individuals who harbour secret fantasies of greatness, delusions of grandeur, who are vulnerable in the kind of situation I'm depicting here. Know thyself.

Even beneath the crushing and demoralizing blow of the Cirinists' neat encapsulation of the Real, real—or, at least, "real"—F. Stop Kennedy, the fantastic notion that Jaka might have some greater interest in him than as a mere patroness gets introduced "by the back door" (as it were):

a) F. Stop Kennedy believes the tearful Cirinist has a sexual interest in him. b) Like all of his vain delusions, he clings to the idea no matter what evidence there is to the contrary (i.e., she left the scene while he was getting "ready"). c) The third Cirinist "busts his balls" as hard as she can to convince him that he isn't sexually attractive to ANYone. d) He is unable, because of his delusional nature, to believe he is sexually unattractive to the tearful Cirinist, so he decides the third Cirinist must be lying about everything. e) The seed is planted that he must be sexually attractive to Jaka since the third Cirinist has tried to convince him that he isn't.

The third Cirinist (I really should've given them names, if only for this section of "Chasing Scott") appears to be overreacting, landing on poor F. Stop with lead-lined hiking boots, but that can be attributed to his having introduced a level of nuance with which the Cirinists are distinctly uncomfortable. They think that he is in love with Jaka and Gloria (and now wants to add the tearful Cirinist to his "harem"). His "reminder" at the bottom of page 274 of the "letter of the law" thus seems to the Cirinist as a real, way-out-of-line "nyah nyah." Needless to say, you don't "nyah nyah" a Cirinist, not unless you want to get your balls busted metaphorically (first) with a promise of genuinely physical ball-busting if you don't "get back in line."

It is a testimony to the resilience of the genuinely delusional that F. Stop bounces back from this, with the seed planted that Jaka might now be sexually interested in him.

Page 277 – Well, come ON. It doesn't happen right away. Walter Mitty's still in shock on this page. Cut him some slack, folks.

Page 278 – Old Canadian joke. Autobiographical only insofar as it always fascinated me to see the reactions of my girlfriends and "girlfriends" from more temperate climates—whose idea of "bundling up" was wearing a T-shirt under a sweater—to winter in Southern Ontario.

Page 279 – New Canadian joke (I just made it up).

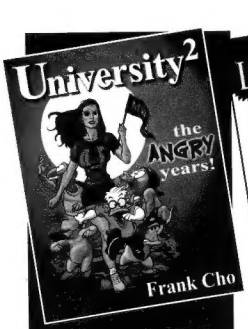
Pages 281-83 – Here's a good example of the syndrome I described in the note for page 270. Way back when I was beginning to write "Fall and the River," I decided that when it came time to write the description of the artists' colony on Mealc, I would lift, word for word, Scott Fitzgerald's description of the "large, proud, rose-colored hotel," which opens *Tender is the Night*. Had a very clear mental picture of a solid block of text running down the side of page 281 and then a three-page "Go nuts, Ger" of the chateau and a panoramic view of the Sea of the South. Imagine my surprise when I got to that part, dug out my copy of *Tender*, and found the whole thing to be pretty much unusable. "How could I have misremembered this so badly?" Well, misremember it I had. The more I studied the problem, the more I realized that I had projected the writing style of *The Beautiful and Damned* and *its* structure—scenes like building blocks balanced on top of one another to produce a net *literary* effect—onto *Tender is the Night*, which was more like an Impressionist painting in its scene-setting, each phrase like a dab of colour, producing a clear mental image. Once I cracked the combination to *that* safe, I just went through and appropriated my favourite dabs of colour and narrowed it down to the ones that would make a sort of free-verse word poem in two "left to right, top to bottom" "stanzas" across Ger's three-page panorama (which I laid out very roughly to fit the "stanzas"). From *Tender is the Night* (what I stole is in italics):

> Pg. 3 "In the early morning the *distant image* of Cannes, the pink and cream of old fortifications, the purple Alp that bounded Italy, *were cast across the water and lay quavering in the ripples and rings sent up by sea-plants* through the clear shallows."
> Pg. 4 "*Fifty yards away the* Mediterranean *yielded up its pigments, moment by moment, to the brutal sunshine;* below the balustrade a faded Buick cooked on the hotel drive."
> Pg. 15 "It was pleasant to drive back to the hotel in the late afternoon, above *a sea as mysteriously colored as the agates and cornelians of childhood, green as green milk, blue as laundry water, wine dark.*"
> Pg. 25 "Feeling good from the rosy wine at lunch, Nicole Diver folded her arms high enough for the artificial camellia on her shoulder to touch her cheek, and went into her *lovely grassless garden. The garden* was *bounded on one side by the* house, *from which it flowed and into which it ran, on two sides by the old village, and on the last by the cliff falling by ledges to the sea.*"

The last description is of the Villa Diana, which gave me a certain amount of trouble when I decided to use *it* for the Mealcan artists' colony. It gave me a bit of trouble because it's really unclear how large the place is supposed to be—attributable to Fitzgerald mixing up himself with his original model for Dick Diver, Gerald Murphy. If Diver is Gerald Murphy, then that would make Villa Diana Murphy's Villa America, which, reading between the lines in my research, would make it quite a showplace. If Diver is Scott Fitzgerald, that would make Villa Diana variously Villa Maria (1924), Villa Paquita (1926), Villa St. Louis (1926), Villa Fleur des Bois (1929), or some other of Fitzgerald's rented accommodations. I switched to the natural assumption that Fitzgerald would have made himself the model for Dick Diver and (ever the Walter Mitty) appropriated Villa America for himself. I christened it Chateau Euterpe, as a nod to the muse of lyric song and music in Greek mythology and because "Euterpe" *looks* sort of like "Europe." A muse instead of a goddess, a continent instead of a country.

Since Chateau Euterpe, as depicted by Gerhard from my rough layouts, his own readings of the relevant portions of *Tender is the Night,* and his own research into the Mediterranean architecture of the Cote D'Azur, looks more than capable of fending for itself with or with*out* a resident patroness (see page 234), the insightful reader can be forgiven for thinking that F. Stop Kennedy has not been…entirely…forthcoming with the Princess of Palnu in describing the situation in Mealc.

Page 284 – Okay. Disagree with me if you want. Call me crazy. I know you do and I know you will, but *here* is my argument against giving emotion-based beings credibility equivalent to what is given sound-reasoning-based beings. Jaka makes a very human, compassionate gesture towards F. Stop Kennedy—affectionate, grateful, and very much in line with her status as "still thinking about it" would-be patroness, and F. Stop and the Cirinists (not a bad name for a band) go off half-cocked because adultery is very much "in the air." But adultery is only "in the air" because of F. Stop Kennedy's *emotional* reaction to the tearful *(emotional)* Cirinist, which led to the third Cirinst's *emotional* tirade against adultery and against F. Stop, which triggered F. Stop's *emotionally* delusional reaction, which planted the *emotions* seed of Jaka's completely non-existent (trust me, I created her) "adulterous interest" in him. Nothing *factually* has changed in the story—and yet *everything* has changed in the story because the people *shaping* the story make their decisions and draw their conclusions and inferences based *completely* on emotion.



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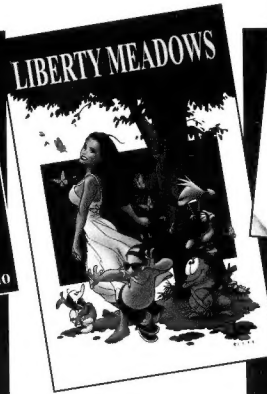

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